UNITED
NATIONS

EP

UNEP/EA.1/L.12

Distr.: Limited
26 June 2014

Original: English

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme

United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme
First session
Nairobi, 23–27 June 2014

Ecosystem-based adaptation

Draft resolution submitted by the Committee of the Whole

The United Nations Environment Assembly,

Noting the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which confirms that climate systems are warming and that global temperatures will continue to rise in the coming decades, if not centuries, even if emissions of greenhouse gases are stabilized, affecting natural systems on which humanity relies and highlighting the need to adapt to the impacts of climate change,

Noting also General Assembly resolution 67/210, in which the Assembly reaffirmed that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time, expressed deep concern that all countries, particularly developing countries, are vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing increased impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, further threatening food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and emphasized that adaptation to climate change represents an immediate and urgent global priority,

Recalling paragraph 190 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio + 20), entitled "The future we want", which expressed concern that all countries are already experiencing the adverse impacts of climate change, which is threatening efforts to achieve sustainable development, eradicate poverty and achieve food security, and emphasized that climate change is an immediate and urgent priority,

Mindful of decision X/33 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in which parties and other Governments were invited, in accordance with national capacities and circumstances, to integrate ecosystem-based approaches for adaptation into relevant strategies, including adaptation strategies and plans, national action plans to combat desertification, national biodiversity strategies and action plans, poverty reduction strategies, disaster risk reduction strategies and sustainable land management strategies on biodiversity and climate change and the role of ecosystem-based adaptation highlighted therein, and decision XI/15, in which parties were called on to mainstream ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, ecosystem restoration and invasive species management for human health and wellbeing into all island development and conservation plans projects and build capacity in their application, inviting organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme, to support ecosystem-based adaptation,

Mindful of the work of the Nairobi Work Programme of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the process to support the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans,

Acknowledging the dependence of all countries, particularly developing countries, on ecosystems for livelihoods, food production and well-being, including adaptation to the impacts of climate change,

Noting the United Nations Environment Programme Airica Adaptation Gap Report, which indicates that climate change will affect, among other sectors, biodiversity, water supply, human health and food production, and that it is likely to increase the number of people at risk of hunger as well as the proportion of malnourished people in a region where 22 per cent of the population already suffers from hunger,

Bearing in mind that adaptation and mitigation actions generate multiple co-benefits,

Noting with concern that the resilience of many ecosystems is already being exceeded by an unprecedented combination of climate change, associated disturbances and other drivers,

Recognizing the adverse impacts of climate change among other drivers, on ecosystems and on their ability to meet the needs for local food production and national food security and, inter alia, water resources,

Conscious of the heightened vulnerability of developing countries, particularly the least-developed countries and the small island developing States, to the impacts of climate change,

Recognizing that ecosystem-based approaches should contribute to climate resilient sustainable development in synergy with other adaptation relevant approaches in all sectors,

Recognizing also the sovereignty and stewardship of all countries over their ecosystems and natural resources, which are threatened by climate change and other drivers,

Recalling Governing Council decision 22/3, in which the Council requested the United Nations Environment Programme to support, within available resources and in the light of its programme of work, regional and national action plans to reduce the vulnerability of developing countries to climate change,

Recognizing the ongoing work of the United Nations Environment Programme on ecosystem-based adaptation activities to reduce vulnerability to climate change and subsequent vulnerabilities in areas such as food security, water, health or biodiversity,

Recognizing also the role of civil society, scientific institutions and other relevant stakeholders in providing, inter alia, evidence, tools, case studies, monitoring and best practices in ecosystem-based adaptation,

Recognizing further the need to take into consideration the needs of and engage vulnerable groups and communities in the implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation measures,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in partnership with Governments, scientific institutions, United Nations agencies, civil society and other relevant stakeholders, within available resources and in the light of its programme of work, to continue providing and enhance support to developing countries, at their request, for the development and implementation of community-based, national and regional ecosystem-based adaptation programmes and activities through, inter alia, practical tools and pilot projects to demonstrate the use of those tools and other policymaking technical support;

2. *Encourages* all countries to include and improve ecosystem-based adaptation and community-based adaptation in their national policies, including those on climate change adaptation, food security and sustainable management of forests, according to their national circumstances and priorities;

3. *Invites* all countries, in the formulation and implementation of ecosystem-based adaptation and community-based adaptation measures, to consider in an integrated manner indigenous, local and traditional knowledge systems and practices, including, where appropriate, indigenous and local communities' holistic view of community and environment, as one of the a major resource for adapting to climate change;

4. *Invites* all countries to take into consideration ecosystems in their development planning for all relevant sectors, including in their climate change adaptation policies and plans;

5. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to continue its collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and other relevant institutions and organizations to integrate ecosystems as key element in national adaptation planning processes, according to the guidelines of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, also taking into account guidance developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

6. *Calls upon* countries in position to do so to continue to support the development and implementation of programmes, projects and development policies for adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change that takes into account ecosystems, especially of developing countries at their request;

7. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to report to the United Nations Environment Assembly at its second session on progress in the implementation of the present resolution.